

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace the paragraph on page 57 line 4 with the following amended paragraph:

(9) Calcium gradual release index

First, in a vessel of polypropylene (made by Teraoka K.K. and sold under the product code of "Type 24-0210-02") measuring 80 mm in inside diameter and 250 mm in height, 1 L of an aqueous calcium solution having a calcium ion concentration of 200 mg/L and adjusted to $25 \pm 0.5^{\circ}\text{C}$ was placed and then a 1 g sample of water absorbent resin was introduced into the vessel, and they were stirred with a ~~stirrer~~ stirring bar (made by Sogo Rikagaku Glass Seisakusho K.K. and sold under the product code of "1065-10") ~~50 mm in diameter at a rotational frequency of 60 rpm for length and 8 mm in diameter at a rotational frequency of 60 rpm for 48 hours.~~ The stirring was performed in a thermostat kept at a temperature of $25 \pm 1^{\circ}\text{C}$. After the 48 hours' stirring, the aqueous calcium chloride solution having the water absorbent resin dispersed therein was collected with a disposable syringe (inner volume 30 ml; made by Thermo K.K. and sold under the product code of "SS-30ES") and the water absorbent resin reduced to a swelled gel was separated by filtration by the use of a filter (made by GL Science K.K. and sold under the product code of "Type 25A") to recover an aqueous calcium solution. The recovered aqueous calcium solution was assayed by plasma emission spectral analysis to determine the amount of calcium (X mg/L). Besides, 1 L of an aqueous calcium chloride solution having a calcium ion concentration of 200 mg/L and having no water absorbent resin dispersed therein was directly stirred with the ~~stirrer~~ stirring bar mentioned above for 48 hours under the aforementioned conditions. The aqueous solution stirred and passed the aforementioned disposable syringe and filter was assayed by plasma emission spectral analysis by way of a blank test to determine the amount of calcium (Y mg/L). The calcium gradual release index was calculated in accordance with the following formula.

$$\text{Calcium gradual release index (mg/L)} = X - Y$$